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GUN DEALER LINKS CIA TO SMUGGLING

By JERRY CAPECI

A FORMER gun dealer and munitions expert testified yesterday that an FBI informant in the gun-running trial of five Irish-Americans had been a CIA operative for more than 20 years.

Earl Redick, 59, who also served seven years in U.S. Army Intelligence, said George DeMeo used his CIA connections to fix a gun-running case.

- Redick told in Brooklyn

Federal Court how both were indicted in 1969 in over an arms shipment destined for the Republic of Chad in Africa.

"DeMeo told me not to worry about it — the boys in Washington would take care of it and the case would never go to trial," Redick told Michael Dowd, lawyer for defendant Patrick Mullin.

He said that on the day trial was to start, the prosecutor withdrew the charges for "national se-

curity reasons," while three CIA lawyers sat in the courtroom.

Mullin and his co-defendants claim they violated no U.S. laws by shipping weapons to the Irish Republican Army because they had the approval of the U.S. government through DeMeo.

Irish nationalist leader Bernadette Devlin, who was shot five times last year by Protestant gunmen, appeared in court yesterday to testify as a

character witness.

Her testimony, however, was put off until today by Judge Joseph McLaughlin.

Mullin, George Harrison, Thomas Fahey and Michael Flannery, face 10 years in prison if convicted.

Daniel Gormley, the ring's alleged "money man," is charged only with conspiracy. He faces a maximum of five years if convicted.